

Senate Bill 595

By: Senators Meyer von Bremen of the 12th, Golden of the 8th, Thompson of the 5th, Brown of the 26th and Reed of the 35th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

To amend Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elementary and secondary education, so as to change the dates relating to the reporting system for purposes of qualification for the HOPE scholarship; to provide for notice; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elementary and secondary education, is amended by striking Code Section 20-2-157, relating to the uniform reporting system for certain purposes, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"20-2-157.

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly to establish a uniform reporting system to be used as one of the criteria to determine eligibility of students seeking enrollment in postsecondary courses pursuant to Code Section 20-2-161.1 or seeking educational scholarships, grants, or loan assistance administered by the Georgia Student Finance Commission pursuant to Article 7 of Chapter 3 of this title.

(b) Beginning May 1, ~~2007~~ 2010, each school system and private school shall adopt the reporting system described in this subsection for purposes of identifying and qualifying graduating seniors for the HOPE scholarship program and other programs identified in this Code section:

(1) Each school system and private school shall transmit, in a manner and at times prescribed by the Georgia Student Finance Commission, an electronic transcript of courses and course grades for each graduating senior that reflects the complete high school academic record of the student, including scores on any state tests required for graduation, the grading scales used by the school system or private school for the time periods referenced by the transcripts, and any other pertinent information as determined

1 by the Georgia Student Finance Commission. Each grade reported by a school system or
2 private school to the commission for the purpose of calculating the grade point average
3 for HOPE scholarship eligibility shall be the actual grade earned by the student, with no
4 weighting or addition of points by the local school system or private school;

5 (2) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall calculate a grade point average for
6 the purpose of determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship from these electronic
7 transcripts and shall notify students of their eligibility and high schools as to the
8 eligibility of students;

9 (3) For students otherwise qualified and enrolling as freshmen students in eligible public
10 or private postsecondary institutions for the first time on May 1, ~~2007~~ 2010, or thereafter,
11 the Georgia Student Finance Commission shall calculate grade point averages for
12 determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship and other scholarships referenced in this
13 Code section as follows:

14 (A) For students receiving a college preparatory diploma, each grade for a student in
15 attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign
16 language that would, if successfully completed, satisfy a core graduation requirement
17 for the college preparatory curriculum shall be equated to a grade on a 4.0 scale, such
18 that a grade of 'A' = 4.0, a grade of 'B' = 3.0, a grade of 'C' = 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0,
19 and a grade of 'F' = 0; or

20 (B) For students receiving a career/technical diploma, each grade for a student in
21 attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, and social studies that would,
22 if successfully completed, satisfy a core graduation requirement for the career/technical
23 curriculum shall be equated to a grade on a 4.0 scale, such that a grade of 'A' = 4.0, a
24 grade of 'B' = 3.0, a grade of 'C' = 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0, and a grade of 'F' = 0.

25 Grades for coursework that is classified as advanced placement or international
26 baccalaureate shall be weighted by the Georgia Student Finance Commission in
27 calculating the overall grade point averages for students, provided that the weighting of
28 such course grades is uniformly applied to all students in the state taking the specified
29 coursework. The sum of the equated grades shall be divided by the number of course
30 grades, adjusted for term length, to yield a grade point average on a 4.0 scale;

31 (4) Qualification for the HOPE scholarship shall be determined from the grade point
32 average calculated as set out in paragraph (3) of this subsection. Beginning May 1, ~~2007~~
33 2010, students with grade point averages equal to or in excess of 3.0 on the 4.0 scale with
34 a college preparatory diploma shall meet achievement standards for the HOPE
35 scholarship; students receiving a career/technical diploma shall meet achievement
36 standards for the HOPE scholarship with a grade point average equal to or in excess of

1 3.2 on a 4.0 scale. This paragraph shall apply regardless of when a student graduated
2 from high school and regardless of such student's eligibility status prior to May 1, ~~2007~~
3 2010; and

4 (5) Beginning May 1, ~~2007~~ 2010, only the reporting system as indicated in this
5 subsection shall be used to determine eligibility for all grants, scholarships, or loans to
6 attend colleges or universities which are administered pursuant to Article 7 of Chapter
7 3 of this title and eligibility for enrollment in postsecondary courses pursuant to Code
8 Section 20-2-161.1.

9 (c)(1) Prior to May 1, ~~2007~~ 2010, each school system shall adopt the following reporting
10 system for purposes of identifying and qualifying graduating seniors for the HOPE
11 scholarship program and other programs identified in this Code section:

12 (A) A final grade average of at least an 80 numeric average in their core curriculum
13 subjects, provided that the student meets the college preparatory curriculum
14 requirements; or

15 (B) A final grade average of at least an 85 numeric average in their core curriculum
16 subjects if the student meets the career/technical curriculum requirements.

17 (2) Prior to May 1, ~~2007~~ 2010, only the reporting system as indicated in this subsection
18 shall be used to determine eligibility for all grants, scholarships, or loans to attend
19 colleges or universities which are administered pursuant to Article 7 of Chapter 3 of this
20 title and eligibility for enrollment in postsecondary courses pursuant to Code Section
21 20-2-161.1.

22 (d) Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, each local board of education shall be
23 required to provide annual notice to students enrolled in grade eight of the reporting system
24 and grade requirements of this Code section effective beginning May 1, 2010, which will
25 apply to such students upon graduation."

26 SECTION 2.

27 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.